

HISTORICAL - HOBBY BOILER OWNER'S UPDATE - April-2008

This update is a reminder and notice to all historical - hobby boiler owners in Wisconsin that the annual inspections are fast approaching. Spring is here and the summer is just around the corner. It will not be long before you will want to fire up the Hobby/Traction Engine Boiler. As much as I and the Chief Boiler Inspector would like to see all of the shows, it is somewhat hard to be at all of the places at the same time, especially since some of the shows fall on the same weekends. If you don't see one of us, more than likely the State District Inspector will visit you.

The Department wishes to extend our appreciation to owners and operators whose cooperation and input were very instrumental during this past year in making recommendations in the rule process and contributing toward successful inspections. Comm 41.90 Subchapter IX – Historical Boilers administrative rules will be changing later this year. I want to personally thank Mike Wahl and Peter Burno for working with the National Board and Wisconsin to adopt the national standards. This will allow Wisconsin and surrounding states to uniformly administer these codes. In late fall we will be adopting new Historical Boiler standards, NBIC-2007 Part-2 Section 6, Supplement-2 in its entirety.

UT testing has been a great success over the past several years. In cooperation with the department, the Wisconsin Historical Steam Engine Association and other interested parties, future improvements in our inspection process will be possible. Furthermore, after those UT readings and calculations were accomplished, many owners have verified fitness for service and also have proof of a safe operating pressure for their boilers based on actual conditions and material thickness. In addition, both present and subsequent owners can use such permanent records for future repair analysis.

The plan is to further assist and educate steam power enthusiasts. The Department has designed a checklist form (SBD-10579) for the owner/operator, recommended a UT grid mapping guideline and developed several program brochures that can be distributed at shows to help explain Wisconsin's requirements. Anyone can get copies of the historical - hobby boiler information letters, applicable codes, checklist and brochures from our Commerce website <http://commerce.wi.gov/SB/>. Enclosed for your convenience is the **Historical - Hobby Boilers Brochure**.

Finally and most importantly Summer is around the corner with outdoor family activities on the rise. Some families will attend weekend shows or visit the county and local fairs to witness the awesome power of steam. The curious attendees who hear the blast from a steam whistle or see smoke billowing overhead at the fairgrounds may be unaware of the dangers associated with high-pressure steam equipment. Therefore, each owner and operator should look out for one another and take responsibility to protect the public minimizing those dangers through inspection and safe operating procedures. To complement the enclosed Historical - Hobby Boiler Brochure information, the following list might help owners and operators assure safe operation during the 2007 season.

- Arrange for required inspection. Obtain and post the Permit to Operate "PTO"
- Check fusible plugs and fire door latches for proper installation / operation.
- Test safety valves and other appurtenances.
- Assure a trained attendant is continuously monitoring the equipment while in operation.
- Keep spectators at a safe distance to prevent burning or scalding.

The Department looks forward to another successful year of inspections and is confident that the brochure and educational aids mentioned above will be helpful to you and visitors. Thank you again for your continued assistance and cooperation to make the many varieties of historical steam powered equipment available, operating and SAFE for everyone to enjoy.

Let's continue to keep this hobby safe and enjoyable for all. Maintain a Safe Water Level in the Boiler.

Sincerely,

Rick Merkle

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